

**PHOTOCOPY  
PRESERVATION**

**“Women of Vision” Awards  
Bal Harbour, FL  
1/26/00**

**The Weizmann Institute of Science "Women of Vision" Awards  
Remarks by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton**

**Bal Harbour, Florida  
January 26, 2000**

Thank you all so very much. I am deeply honored to join the company of all of you, and especially the honorees. I want to thank Florence Caplan and Roselyn Meyer for their kind words and for their leadership of this event. I am delighted to be here with Dr. Albert Wilner (phonetic) and his wife, Blanche. And I thank you for your leadership of the American Committee for the Weizmann Institute of Science.

I'm always pleased to be anywhere with Dr. Ruth, who has been a friend of mine for some years. And in a way that I'll tell you in a minute which demonstrates how small the world is, has been part of my work in an indirect way for some time.

I want to congratulate the other honorees: Kristi Krueger, Dr. Judith Lederhandler, Dr. Nell Lewis, Bonnie Schaefer, and my dear friend, Nan Rich. I have to confess that I thought I was coming today to give an award to Nan Rich, who richly deserves this award and so many other awards of recognition for her commitment and advocacy. And I was on my way down from the very cold and wintry and snowy Northeast, when I looked at my papers for today and realized that I was going to receive an award today. So I am doubly honored. But I would have been here in any event, so long as I could have gotten out in the snow, to be part of the congratulations due to the Weizmann Institute and to the honorees, especially Nan.

Nan and I first worked together because of something that happened to me here in South Florida so many years ago in the early 1980s. I happened to be here for a meeting on some kind of business, and I was in the hotel room getting ready for the day. I was looking through the Miami Herald, and I saw a picture of a woman working with a mother and a child. And I read about a program that had started at Hebrew University by a woman named Dr. Avima Lombard (phonetic), with a program that had been funded by the National Council of Jewish Women, with the rather catchy acronym of HIPPY—Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters. And I was immediately struck by what a fabulous idea this was, since I believe strongly that a child's parents, particularly a mother, is that child's first teacher. And this was a program that was aimed at helping a mother be the very best first teacher her child could have, regardless of that mother's own level of education and her economic background.

Well I began a long telephone tag game trying to find Dr. Lombard, and I started by calling the National Council for Jewish Women. And I was eventually put into contact with Dr. Lombard and was able to meet, first by lost distance and then personally, Nan, who as many of you know was very active in NCJW, and eventually served as president. And then to bring this story of small world, six-degrees-of-separation to a conclusion, I began working to bring HIPPY programs—a wonderful export from Israel, thanks to the NCJW and Hebrew University—to the United States, and I worked on a national board to do that. And the young woman we hired to be the director of the HIPPY program was Dr. Ruth's daughter, Miriam.

So you see, all of this is somehow interconnected. And it brings us here today because women of vision, on behalf of improving the lives of children and people throughout our globe, are gathered here in support of an institute that has done so much and continues to lead the way globally in our search for answers to disease and to all of the other ailments that affect us. So I thank you so much for allowing me to be part of this event.

I've had the privilege of attending other Weizmann events. I've spoken at dinners twice in Chicago, honoring two very special contributors to the Weizmann Institute's activities. But every time I do, I am amazed to learn again about the breadth of the work that the Institute is doing. Just name any disease—whether it is cancer or multiple sclerosis or diabetes or AIDS—name any deadly, debilitating condition, and the Weizmann Institute is on the forefront of making the breakthrough discoveries that are improving our lives. Think of all the people who can now walk or go back to work or watch their children grow to adulthood because of the Weizmann Institute and the support of people like you. You have had faith in this vital institution for many years now. And as members and friends of the Women in Science Committee, you have made a special commitment to ensuring that research into women's health remains a priority for the Institute as we go into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Let me commend you for the new scholarships for breast and ovarian cancer research that you have endowed, which is a wonderful symbol of the commitment that you all feel to the Institute.

This is a particularly hopeful time for women's health. It wasn't always so. I can remember how, not so long ago, the very first clinical trials about breast cancer were actually conducted on men. But thankfully we are now long past that time, and we have invested significantly in women's health, and we have engaged in the hard work of uncovering those conditions that affect only or primarily women.

So it is a hopeful time. And I am pleased that in our own country, we have seen in the last seven years a doubling of our investments in breast cancer research and the expansion of Medicare coverage to include annual mammograms. We have much more work to do, however. It is not enough that we put women's health on the map or on the national agenda. We have to be sure that we stay committed. That's important here and it's important in Israel—it's important throughout the world. Women of vision like those honored here, as well as so many of you in this audience—the reason you're so important is because your voices were heard and must continue to be raised. I don't believe we would have the investments in women's health were it not for the advocacy of countless women, particularly around the issue of breast cancer.

A few weeks ago I was on Long Island at a meeting at Adelphi University, talking about breast cancer, because some of you may know that there is considerable concern in certain parts of the country, including Long Island, because there seems to be a real hot spot for breast cancer and other cancers, including prostate cancer as well, so it's not just affecting women. And we were talking about all the ways that the advocacy on behalf of breast cancer, particularly by the courageous survivors who have led this fight, have pushed us not only to expand our commitment to research and to finding a cure for breast cancer and to improving treatment, whether it's better standards for mammogram or more effective drugs. But those who've advocated, those women of vision who've advocated on behalf of breast cancer, have also

pushed the limits against all kinds of cancers and other diseases as well. So we are finding that the expansion of our investment in breast cancer is now in ovarian cancer and cervical cancer, osteoporosis, and other diseases that affect women.

We've also discovered that one of the cruelest ironies in our own country is that while we support so much of this breakthrough research, it is not available to everyone. We have to work very hard to ensure that any woman who faces breast or ovarian cancer or any other disease will have the support and the resources for her condition to be treated.

But all of this is only possible because of the work that scientists do in the laboratories in those clinical trials. We couldn't be celebrating the progress we've made in genetic research and drug breakthroughs were it not for the courageous men and women that you help to support at places like the Weizmann Institute.

So I thank you, because we celebrate today not just those who receive the award as women of vision, we celebrate the countless women and men here and in Israel who understand that we must remain committed to exploring and expanding the bounds of science and putting what we find to work for the betterment of all humanity.

Thank you all so much for your commitment.